

## EXPORT REQUIREMENTS FOR BELGIUM

### ELIGIBLE/INELIGIBLE PRODUCTS

#### A. Eligible

##### 1. EU Requirements

- a. Fresh/frozen meat and offal (edible organs) derived from cattle, calves, swine, sheep, goats, horses (solipeds) and buffalo which have not undergone any treatment other than cold treatment to ensure preservation are eligible (amenable) for export to the European Union (EU) under the requirements established for nonmember countries, the Third Country Directive (TCD).

A "Guideline for the Production of Fresh Meat Intended for Export to the European Union" has been developed and is available through the Export Requirement Library or by request from the Export Coordination Division [telephone: (202) 501- 6022.] This guideline outlines the requirements that FSIS inspected slaughter, cutting, and cold storage facilities must satisfy in order to be approved for export to the EU. Exporters are advised to check the individual member states' documentation requirements for additional certification requirements specific to the country for products amenable to the TCD.

##### b. Definitions

- (1) Edible products originating from species other than those mentioned above (e.g., poultry and processed meat/poultry products including ground products) are not amenable to TCD, and therefore are amenable to the requirements of the individual member states.
- (2) Edible products for animal food, pharmaceutical or other industrial purposes and inedible products are not amenable to the requirements of the TDC and therefore are amenable to the requirements of the individual member states.
- (3) Military shipments are not amenable to the TCD and therefore are amenable to the requirements outlined by the individual member states for military shipments from the US.

##### 2. Belgium Requirements

- a. Fresh, frozen. The following fresh or frozen red meat products are eligible for entry into Belgium, provided they originate from EU approved establishments:
  - (1) Beef or horsemeat tenderloins of any weight.
  - (2) Pork-bone-in hams, loins, and bacon from back and breast.
  - (3) Mutton, lamb, and goat meat-bone-in legs, shoulders, and loins.
  - (4) Unboned heads of all species.
  - (5) Byproduct (edible)--hearts, kidneys, livers, tongues, brains, intestines, stomachs, pancreas, and thymus. Large intestines and stomachs must be scraped and scalded.

- (6) Casings are eligible to be exported to Belgium.
- b. Poultry Products. Federally inspected fresh/frozen poultry and poultry products from Belgium approved facilities may be exported to Belgium.
- c. Processed Red Meat Products. Processed products must be produced from raw materials obtained from EU approved facilities. These further processing facilities must be approved by the Belgian authorities in order to be eligible to be exported to Belgium.
- d. Airline Meals. U.S. meat intended for use in airline meals for consumption by the crew and passengers on board international flights can be exported from any U.S.D.A. inspected facility, provided the product is stored provisionally under customs supervision.

B. Ineligible

Belgium Restrictions

Poultry products with bastings or tenderizers are not permitted.

## FACILITY REQUIREMENTS

Plants desiring to export poultry or further processed meat or poultry products to Belgium must meet the requirements of this section:

- 1. Facilities and Equipment
  - a. Floors must be laid in such a way to facilitate drainage and to avoid pooling of water.
  - b. Waste water from equipment must be conveyed in covered channels to drains fitted with traps and gratings or fitted with proper plumbing directly to the waste disposal system.
  - c. Walls must be smooth, durable, impermeable, light colored, and washable at least to storage height in coolers, up to 10 feet in slaughter rooms and up to 6-1/2 feet in rooms where fresh meat is produced.
  - d. Walls and tight fitting doors are required to separate edible and inedible areas, raw and cooked product areas, cut up and packaging areas, processing and loading areas, and welfare and toilet areas.
  - e. The wall/floor junction must be easily cleanable.
  - f. Wood is not allowed in exposed product areas. This includes its use in equipment and instruments such as wooden pallets, knives, cutting boards, containers, saws, brooms, etc.
  - g. Facilities are required for protection of meat from weather conditions during loading and unloading.
  - h. Recording thermometers are required for cut up, boning, packaging, and frozen storage rooms or whenever ambient room temperatures must be controlled. Recording thermometers are not required in coolers not used for storage.
  - I. Employee welfare facilities must include lockers or alternate devices for storing employees' outer garments. Shower facilities for each sex must also

be provided. Separate dining facilities must be provided to prevent eating in locker rooms.

- j. Toilet rooms must not open directly into work rooms.
  - k. Adequate number of hand-washing facilities throughout the plant must be other-than-hand operated and supplied with hot and cold water. In operation areas, hand-washing facilities must be located near work stations.
  - l. Adequate number of sanitizers, with a water temperature not less than 180°F, must be conveniently located where hand tools are used.
  - m. Product containers must not be stored directly on floor surfaces.
  - n. Plant management is responsible for controlling employees and visitors entering and exiting plant premises, i.e., perimeter fence.
2. Processing Requirements
- During further processing, wrapping, and packaging, the internal temperature of the meat must not exceed 44.6°F(+7°C), the internal temperature of the poultry meat must not exceed 39.2°F (+4°C) and temperature of offal must not exceed 37.4°F(+3°C). Meat and offal subjected to freezing (frozen storage) are not required to meet these temperatures. During processing, the temperature of the room must not exceed 53.6°F(+12°C).

## SLAUGHTER REQUIREMENTS

### Poultry

- a. Pre-slaughter stunning is required (an exception is permitted for religious purposes).
- b. Hand-washing facility is required in hanging area.
- c. The stunning and bleeding area must be separated from the hang-on bay for live birds.
- d. Hand-washing facility and sanitizer is required in bleeding area.
- e. Cutting/deboning operations must be physically separated (by a wall or solid partition extending from floor to ceiling) from eviscerating, giblet processing and immersion chilling operations.
- f. Immersion chilling of carcasses must comply with the following:
  - (1) Immersion chilling system shall be a true counterflow, that is, carcasses must move through the chiller against the flow of the water.
  - (2) Potable water shall enter the carcass exit and overflow at the carcass entrance end of chiller.
  - (3) The carcasses must pass through one or more tanks of water or of ice and water the contents of which are continuously renewed. Only the system whereby the carcasses are constantly propelled by mechanical means through a counterflow of water is acceptable.
  - (4) There shall be two temperature recording devices for recording the chill media temperature, one at the carcass entry end and one at the carcass exit end of the chiller. The chill media temperature shall not exceed 61°F. at the carcass entry end and 40°F. at the carcass exit end.
  - (5) There shall be a water meter on the chilling system and a water meter on the final washer.

- (6) Listed below is the amount of water required per bird.
- | Washer    | Chiller   | Bird Size RTC  |
|-----------|-----------|----------------|
| 0.40 gal. | 0.65 gal. | Up to 5.5 lbs. |
| 0.65 gal. | 1.00 gal. | 5.5 to 11 lbs. |
| 0.90 gal. | 1.50 gal. | Over 11 lbs.   |
- (7) Water requirements for final washer are calculated and recorded in the same manner as presently done for the chiller.
- (8) Since poultry slaughter plans may have to alter their operating practices when producing product for the EU, it will be necessary that plant officials notify inspection personnel in advance of producing product for export to the EU or for cutup at another certified plant. Plant officials at the slaughter plant must also identify and ship the product to the cutup plant in a manner acceptable to the IIC. The alterations should include a check to see that metering devices are functioning properly and that a record of the water usage is maintained.
- (9) Slaughter plants may wish to look into utilizing a procedure whereby clean eviscerated poultry is cut or boned in the hot state without subjecting it to immersion chilling. Movement of poultry carcasses direct from slaughter line to cutting room for immediate cutup, packaging, and subsequent chilling is acceptable.

## LABELING REQUIREMENTS

- A. EU Health Marks. Health marks should be applied to both red meat and poultry products destined for Belgium.
- The health mark must be an oval mark applied to labels, packaging materials, and carcass product at least 6.5 cm wide by 4.5 cm high bearing the following information:
    - On the upper part, the name of the consigning country in capitals - USA.
    - In the center, the establishment number, for example, the number 38.
    - The letters must be at least 0.8 cm high and the figures at least 1 cm high.
  - Labels that contain the official oval health mark must be serially numbered. Printing of serial numbers on labels may be done on a plant basis.
  - Labels must be applied to packaging in such a manner that the official oval health mark on the labeling is destroyed when the package is opened.
  - Poultry. The EU health mark should be applied to all individual cartons/packages of poultry products to prevent tampering. Use of the health mark on master cartons alone is not sufficient for Belgium requirements.
- B. Additional Belgium Requirements
- Labels. Product labels must be approved by FSIS Standards and Labeling Division. One label shall be affixed outside container and one shall be placed inside. A label need not be on the container if all cans or packages therein bear identical labels. The label shall show kind of meat, official establishment number of processing or producing plant, and country of origin.

2. If product is intended for further processing in Belgium, a derogation may be obtained from the Belgian authorities to exempt labelling individual product packages. This will enable the exporter to label the shipping container.
3. Casings. Identify containers with inspection mark shown in the regulations (312.8). Nodular casings shall be described on the certificate as "Nodular (not clear)."

## DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

A. EU Requirements. Certification requirements for products amenable to the Third Country Directive (TCD) are in the "Guideline for the Production of Fresh Meat Intended for Export to the European Union."

### B. Belgium Requirements for Meat and Poultry Products

1. Weights and number of cartons. The weights and numbers of cartons for each EST/PLANT numbers which appears on the product labels in each shipment must be shown on the export certificate. Reserve one line for each EST/PLANT number on export certificate which includes weight, number of cartons and product name.
2. Export stamp. Export stamp showing certificate number must be applied to main panel of each carton.
3. Signature on certificates. All required forms and supplementary statements must be dated and signed by a veterinarian. Name, degree, (DVM or equivalent) must be typed or printed after signature.
4. Meat products.
  - a. Obtain FSIS Form 9060-5 (FSIS form 9060-10 for horsemeat).
  - b. Obtain FSIS Form 9130-2 (MP Form 7), Certificate of Wholesomeness, for exports of fresh meat and meat byproducts.
  - c. Obtain FSIS Form 9130-3 (MP Form 95) for processed meat food products.
  - d. Belgium import regulations apply to all meat, including horsemeat, and all processed and canned products with more than 5 percent meat by weight.
5. Poultry products.
  - a. Obtain FSIS Form 9060-5.
  - b. Obtain FSIS Form 9180-6--Animal Health Certificate for Fresh Poultry Meat for Human Consumption (Intended for the EU). \*
  - c. Obtain MP form 47--Certificate of Wholesomeness for poultry products destined for importation into Belgium. To comply with item (e) of MP Form 47, the owner or producer of poultry to be exported must sign a certificate stating all requirements in such item. The certificate must be given to the MPI officer signing the form. Product with bastings or tenderizers is not permitted.
6. Casings. Obtain FSIS Form 9180-7 (4/97)--Animal Health Certificate for Animal Casings Intended for Dispatch to the European Community. \*
7. Certification for Origin and Thermic Treatment of Bones. \*
- a. The Origin and Thermic Treatment Certificate must accompany degreased bones processed by heating which are imported into the Benelux trade.

- b. The Origin and Thermic Treatment Certificate must state that the bones:
  - (1) Do not come from animals kept in industries or territories where veterinary policy prohibitions are applicable, or from animals slaughtered as a result of a national program against infectious diseases. (Brucellosis is not a concern of the intent of this declaration).
  - (2) Have been obtained in the forwarding country and come from animals slaughtered in an establishment recognized by the competent authority of that country.
  - (3) Come from animals that before and after slaughtering did not show any symptoms of contagious disease(s) and that after slaughtering have been considered appropriate for human consumption.
  - (4) Have been subjected for at least one hour to a dry thermic treatment of at least 190oF(87.8oC) followed by a dry thermic treatment of at least 45 minutes at a temperature of at least 169oF(76.1oC).
  - (5) Do not contain pathogenic germs likely to cause contagious epizootic diseases to animals.
  - (6) Have been processed in an establishment where any contact with slaughtering tools that have not been submitted to a thermic treatment as described in section 2.b.(4) above is not excluded.
  - (7) Were in good condition on shipment and are forwarded by priorily cleaned and disinfected means of transportation.

C. Edible products for pharmaceutical use.

- 1. Obtain FSIS Form 9060-5 (MP-130). The following statement must be typed in the "remarks" section "Not Intended for Human Consumption." Must have U.S. exporting company name and Belgium importing company name on the certificate.
- 2. Boxes must be marked "Not Intended for Human Consumption" on the main panel.
- 3. Importer must have license from Belgium government to bring product into country for pharmaceutical use.

D. Edible/Inedible Product for Animal Food

- 1. Edible product
  - a. Cartons must bear all required labeling features (including the inspection legend for edible products) and be marked "NOT FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION".
  - b. Obtain FSIS Form 9060-5 and FSIS Form 9205-5-- Health Certificate for the Importation of Products of Animal Origin Intended for the Preparation of Pet Food.
  - c. The U.S. exporting company and the Belgium importing company must be listed on the certificates.
  - d. Certificates must be marked "NOT INTENDED FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION" and must be signed by a FSIS veterinarian.
- 2. Inedible product
  - a. Obtain FSIS Form 9060-9 and FSIS Form 9205-5.
  - b. All other Belgium requirements to export edible products for animal food will

apply.

E. Military Requirements

1. Exports for U.S. military personnel may originate from any official establishment in the United States.
2. Certification requirements for military shipments to Belgium have not been determined at this time. Contact Export Coordination Division for additional information.

## HANDLING/STORAGE REQUIREMENTS

A. Belgian Requirements for Wrapping and Packaging of Red Meat and Poultry Products

1. Wrapping and Packaging.
  - a. Receiving and Storing of Wrapping and Packaging Materials.
    - (1) Wrapping and packaging material must be transported with sufficient protective covering to assure a hygienic condition when arriving at the establishment.
    - (2) Storage rooms for packaging material must be dust- and vermin-free and must not contain substances that might contaminate fresh meat or have air connection with rooms containing substances that might contaminate fresh meat.
    - (3) Packaging materials must not be stored on the floor.
  - b. Assembling and Transferring of Boxes.
    - (1) Under hygienic conditions, boxes must be assembled in a separate room and be transferred into the production room and used progressively.
    - (2) Assembled boxes must be managed in a manner which prevents contamination of the product contact surfaces.
  - c. Packaging Product.
    - (1) Packaging should be done in a separate room. However, cutting, boning, wrapping, and packaging operations may take place in the same room provided that the room is sufficiently large and so arranged that the hygiene of the operation is assured.
    - (2) Boxes may not be assembled in an exposed meat area or handled by staff handling fresh meat.
    - (3) The reuse of shipping containers is prohibited.
    - (4) Immediately after packaging, the meat must be placed in the storage rooms.

## OTHER REQUIREMENTS

A. Staff Hygiene and Dress

1. Workers must wear recognizable, protective clothing and water resistant footwear.

Protective clothing must be other than street clothing. Headgear and neck shields must be worn by employees when necessary. Plant management must encourage acceptable work habits.

2. Employees handling meat must have a record of an annual certification by a physician as being medically fit to handle food (showing no signs or symptoms of a communicable disease).

B. Water Testing Requirements

1. The initial water testing requirements are as follows:

Test		Sample size:		Temperature:		Maximum concentration
Total Coliform		100 ml		37 C		Membrane filter - 0 or MPN < 1
Fecal coliform		100 ml		37 C		Membrane filter - 0 or MPN < 1
Fecal streptococci		100 ml		37 C		Membrane filter - 0 or MPN < 1
Sulphite-reducing clostridia		20 ml		37 C		MPN < 1
Total Plate count		1 ml		37 C		Guide level - 10
Total Plate count		1 ml		22 C		Guide level - 100

2. Subsequent water testing

- a. Frequency:

- (1) Annually, if municipal source of water and no intermediate storage in the plant.
- (2) Monthly, if private source of water or intermediate storage is used.

- b. Two examinations are required:

- (1) Total plate count at 37 C and 22 C incubated for a minimum of 72 hours.
- (2) and total coliform at 37 C incubated for a minimum of 48 hours.

3. Sampling

- a. Samples must be taken from randomly selected water taps within the establishments.
- b. A diagram of tap locations and log of which taps have been sampled should also be maintained.

4. Test results. If test results are not within the required parameters, immediate retesting must be done. Contact Export Coordination Division for retest information.
5. Chlorination testing. A daily chlorination test is required if private water is used and chlorination is required for potability.

## PLANTS ELIGIBLE TO EXPORT

A. Plant Approval

1. Poultry slaughter/cut up plants and further processed red meat and poultry plants which desire to apply for approval to export to Belgium must meet Belgium requirements. Nomination for final review must be initiated by plant management via a letter of intent to the Director of ECD, IP. FSIS/IP/ECD will coordinate with plant management to schedule the advisory review by a staff officer in a timely fashion. The



plant facilities may need to be reviewed by the Belgian authorities prior to final approval.

2. Casings. Casings must originate from an EU approved casing facility. \*
3. Airline Meals. US meat intended for use in airline meals produced in Belgium can originate from any USDA federally inspected facility. \*
4. Sample shipments to Belgium. Belgian Veterinary Services can authorize an individual derogation for samples prior to pursuing plant approval. The Belgian authorities need the following information: Product name, ingredient statement, quantity, the company names and addresses of the US exporter and Belgian importer, the name of the EU or Belgian approved slaughterhouse the meat comes from, and the port of entry. \*
5. Military Shipments. Meat and poultry products intended for military use can originate from any U.S.D.A. inspected facility. \*

B. List of Eligible Plants

The list of Poultry Slaughter and Further Processed Establishments Approved to Export to Belgium are updated periodically. These are available through the computerized Export Requirement Library database. A printed copy can be obtained from ECD.

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